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**Report of General S. McGowan of Battles of the Wilderness and  
Spotsylvania Courthouse.**

[We are indebted to our gallant friend, General McGowan, for a number of his reports, and take pleasure in giving the following in continuation of the reports of the campaign of 1864, the publication of which was begun in our August number.]

**HEADQUARTERS MCGOWAN'S BRIGADE,  
LINES NEAR PETERSBURG,  
September 1st, 1864.**

Major—In obedience to orders from division headquarters, July 15th, 1864, I have the honor to submit the following report of the engagements of this campaign in which my brigade participated under my command.

**WILDERNESS.**

About noon of Wednesday, 4th May, under the orders of Major-General Wilcox, my brigade left their winter quarters on the Rapidan and marched through Orange Courthouse, following General Heth's division down the Plank road towards Fredericksburg. That night we bivouacked near Veditersville. The next morning took up the line of march in the same order; heard skirmishing in

front, and about 2 o'clock P. M. reached the point in the Wilderness where the column had halted in the presence of the enemy. Poague's battalion of artillery was in position on an eminence in a little old field on the left of the road. Heavy firing at some distance to our left and front indicated an engagement of General Ewell, who had marched down the turnpike parallel with and between the Plank road and the river. In order, as I supposed, to co-operate with General Ewell, our division left the Plank road at Poague's artillery, and, filing square to the left, advanced about half a mile, and reaching open fields, formed line of battle looking towards the right of General Ewell, then in sight. The brigades of Generals Lane and Thomas advanced some distance. My brigade was formed perpendicular to the line of advance to support it. Whilst in this position a heavy fire of musketry was opened on our right at the Plank road upon the division of General Heth. An officer of Lieutenant-General Hill's staff in a few minutes galloped up, and in the absence of General Wilcox (who was with Generals Lane and Thomas) ordered me to return at once to the Plank road. As the fire was very heavy, I did return hastily without waiting for the orders of Major-General Wilcox. As I approached the point of fire, I met General Lee, who directed me to proceed down the Plank road and report to General Heth, who was conducting the fight. I did so, and was directed by him to deploy my brigade on both sides of the Plank road, and, if possible, drive the enemy down towards the Brock road. I was instructed to put three regiments on the left and two on the right of the road; but as the formation was made under fire, I soon perceived that the enemy pressed heaviest on the right of the road, and I therefore took the liberty to place three regiments on that side. The Twelfth (Colonel J. L. Miller) on the extreme right; on his left the Rifles (Lieutenant-Colonel McDuffie Miller); on the left of the road the Thirteenth (Colonel Brockman); and the Fourteenth (Colonel Brown) on the extreme left. In this order we pressed through the dense undergrowth, and, passing over the line of General Heth, which was lying down, charged the enemy and drove him some distance—four or five hundred yards—the whole extent of our front. A battery in the road fired two or three rounds of grape after the charge commenced, but as we approached the guns (two) were hastily removed (leaving one caisson) down the road by hand, and were not used again. We passed over the dead and wounded of the enemy, and through his lines, until our

left struck and crossed a marsh and there was no firing in our front, except a little on our extreme right. The firing on both flanks and to our rear still continuing very heavy, I halted the brigade; and as the firing seemed closing in behind us, information of our position was given to General Wilcox, who directed the brigade to be withdrawn through the gap made. On our return, the enemy was so near the road on both sides that their balls crossed each other. They pressed so close to the road on the left that I sent a part of the brigade in to drive them back, where they found General Thomas engaging them. It was now sundown, and this portion of the brigade remained with General Thomas all night. The remaining portion was massed on the road to the left of General Thomas. Night closed in and the firing ceased, both sides retaining the ground on which they had fought.

In this charge the brigade behaved extremely well. They drove the enemy at all points and captured some prisoners. If our force had been sufficient to drive the enemy in the same way along the whole front, the bloodshed of the next day might possibly have been prevented.

The night of the 5th was an anxious one. The troops stood to their arms all night in the same broken order in which they were at the close of the fight; the line, if any, was something like an irregular horse-shoe—no two brigades touching each other. They had made a good march in the forenoon of that day, and then had fought until after dark. Hungry, thirsty and fatigued, they had to pass a sleepless night, during the long hours of which the enemy could be distinctly heard in the thick covert of the Wilderness making arrangements to envelop them. It was expected that we would be relieved about daylight by General Longstreet's corps, and hence, I suppose, the line was not readjusted; but as the day began to dawn without any appearance of relief, and as I believed from many indications that the enemy would attack us as soon as they could see, I sent for the portion of the brigade left with General Thomas and formed line of battle at an angle with the Plank road and facing the enemy on that (the left) side of the road. As soon as it was light enough, the enemy could be seen moving on our front, rear and right, completely enveloping us, except up the Plank road in the direction from which they had come. At the request of General Thomas, who was to my right and already nearly cut off, I advanced my brigade to shove the enemy farther from the road and prevent him from being entirely surrounded.

Whilst I was advancing and driving the enemy's skirmishers, I saw a brigade retiring in haste and confusion up the road in my rear. A moment after, I saw Thomas rolling up from the right and also passing in my rear, pressed by the enemy coming up the road. My brigade, fighting the enemy in front, and being thus uncovered upon the right and rear, seeing all the other troops retiring and themselves in danger of being surrounded and captured, also began to roll up from the right and fell back a short distance in confusion. It was mortifying, but under the circumstances could not be helped. The left regiment, the Rifles, remained unbroken and came off in good order. The brigade was not demoralized or panic stricken, but acted from necessity. They reformed at once in rear of Poague's artillery, which opened upon and checked the advancing enemy. At this moment the enemy had even flanked the eminence where the artillery stood—their balls reaching that position from the south side of the road, and Lieutenant-General Hill directed me to cross the road and drive them back. I obeyed at once, and in crossing the road came for the first time in contact with General Longstreet's forces, then just coming up. Soon after, I was directed to recross the road and proceed to the left and endeavor to open communication with the right of General Ewell. We drove the enemy's sharpshooters from a house and had a sharp skirmish, but in a short time succeeded in connecting with the right of General Ewell. We here threw up breastworks and lay upon our arms the remainder of the day.

In these operations I am grieved to have to report that our loss was heavy, being an aggregate of 481 killed and wounded, including 43 missing. A full statement of casualties has already been rendered. Colonel John L. Miller, Lieutenant J. R. McKnight and Lieutenant J. A. Garvin, of the Twelfth; Lieutenant S. L. Wier, of the Thirteenth; Lieutenant B. J. Watkins and Lieutenant J. H. Tolar, of the Rifles, were killed; and Lieutenant-Colonel E. F. Bookter, Lieutenant J. A. Watson, of the Twelfth; Lieutenant B. S. Howard, Lieutenant H. H. Heise, Captain Josiah Cox, Captain John G. Barnwell, Lieutenant L. G. Bellot and Captain W. A. Kelly, of the First; Lieutenant J. A. Beard, of the Thirteenth; Major H. H. Harper and Captain J. W. McCarly, of the Fourteenth, and Lieutenant J. H. Robins, Captain R. Junkin, Lieutenant J. R. Sadler, Lieutenant T. B. Means, of the Rifles, were wounded.



SPOTSYLVANIA COURTHOUSE.

We remained at the trenches in the Wilderness until Sunday afternoon, 8th May, when we marched by the right flank towards Spotsylvania, bivouacked that night near Shady Grove church, and reached the Courthouse on Monday morning the 9th. We were put into position by Major-General Wilcox on the right of our line in the suburbs of the village, and immediately threw up a breast-work. There we remained with more or less skirmishing until the 12th. Thursday morning the 12th was dark and rainy, and at a very early hour a tremendous fire of artillery and musketry was heard on the line to our left. We were moved along the breast-work towards the left until we reached a sharp angle in the works near a brick kiln, opposite to which the enemy had established a battery. I threw the sharpshooters into a wood to our front and right to pick off the gunners and horses. There we remained until about 9 o'clock A. M., when I was directed to march with my brigade and report to General Ewell, who directed Major-General Rodes to put me in on the right of his line to support General Harris and assist in filling up the gap which had been made by the capture of Major-General Johnson and a part of his command.

At this place our line of works made a sharp angle, pointing towards the enemy, which angle the enemy held in great force, besides having the woods and ravine in front occupied by multitudes, who seemed to be as thick as they could stand. The right of my brigade extended some distance up the left side of the angle, and rested on nothing but the enemy, who held the point and some portion (I never knew how much) of the right side of the angle. Besides having no support on my right, this part of my line was enfiladed from the point of the angle and the gap held by the enemy. In getting into this trench we had to pass through a terrific fire. I was wounded, and know nothing of what occurred afterwards from personal observation. I am informed that the brigade found in the trenches General Harris and what remained of his gallant brigade, and they (Mississippians and Carolinians mingled together) made one of the most gallant and stubborn defences recorded in history. These two brigades remained there holding our line without reinforcements, food, water or rest, under a storm of balls which did not intermit one instant of time for eighteen hours. The trenches on the right of the bloody angle ran with blood, and had to be cleared of the dead bodies more than once. To give some idea of the intensity of the fire, an oak tree,

twenty inches in diameter, which stood just in rear of the right of the brigade, was cut down by the constant scaling of musket balls, and fell about twelve o'clock Thursday night, injuring by its fall several soldiers of the First South Carolina regiment. The brigades mentioned held their position from ten o'clock Thursday morning until four o'clock Friday morning, when they were withdrawn by order to the new line established in rear.

The loss in my brigade was very heavy, especially in killed,—eighty-six (86) killed on the field; two hundred and forty-eight (248) wounded, many of whom have since died; one hundred and seventeen (117) missing, doubtless captured. Our men lay on one side of the breastworks and the enemy on the other, and in many instances men were pulled over. It is believed that we captured as many prisoners as we lost. Among the casualties are Lieutenant-Colonel W. P. Shooter and Lieutenant E. C. Shooter, Lieutenant J. B. Blackman and Lieutenant J. R. Faulkenburg, of the Twelfth; Colonel B. T. Brockman and Captain J. R. Brockman, of the Thirteenth; Lieutenant A. M. Scarborough and Lieutenant H. R. Hunter, of the Fourteenth, and Captain G. W. Fullerton, of the Rifles, killed; Colonel C. W. McCreary, Lieutenant A. F. Miller, Lieutenant James Armstrong, Captain W. A. Kelly and Lieutenant W. R. Tharin, of the First; Lieutenant W. B. White and Captain Stover, of the Twelfth; Captain J. Y. McFall and Lieutenant W. J. Rook, of the Thirteenth; Captain G. W. Culbertson, Lieutenant J. M. Miller, Lieutenant E. Brown, Captain E. Cowan and Captain J. M. McCarly, of the Fourteenth; Captain L. Rogers, Captain R. S. Cheshire, Lieutenant L. T. Reeder, Lieutenant A. Sinclair and Lieutenant-Colonel G. McD. Miller, of the Rifles, wounded. In all these operations I take pleasure in acknowledging the great assistance of my staff. Major A. B. Wardlaw, Brigade Commissary, Major Harry Hammond, Brigade Quartermaster, Lieutenant C. G. Thompson, Ordnance Officer, were active and efficient in their appropriate departments. Captain L. C. Haskell, A. A. General, and Lieutenant G. Allen Wardlaw, Aid-de-Camp, were everywhere in the field of battle where duty and honor called. Both of these officers had their horses killed under them in the Wilderness, and were always conspicuous for coolness and gallantry.

I have the honor to be, Major, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,

S. MCGOWAN, *Brigadier-General.*

To Major J. A. ENGELHARD,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General, Wilcox's Light Division.*

**Van Dorn's Operations in Northern Mississippi—Recollections of a Cavalryman.**

By Colonel A. F. BROWN.

The writer having had the honor of serving with Van Dorn's cavalry from its organization until the death of its gallant commander, proposes to narrate some of the events connected with its history. As the sketch is written without access to official data of any kind, it claims to be nothing more nor less than the "recollections of a cavalryman."

General Van Dorn took command of cavalry in December, 1862, but, to understand clearly the causes which led to his being transferred to that arm of the service, it will be necessary to glance at the situation of affairs in Mississippi just prior to the date mentioned.

The summer and autumn of 1862 brought to the people of North Mississippi the first of the many dark days which they experienced during the war. The Federals occupied Memphis and Corinth and held undisputed possession of the Mississippi and Tennessee rivers north of those points, and it became obvious, early in the autumn, that they were preparing to avail themselves of the easy means of transportation afforded by these streams for concentrating at Memphis, Corinth, and other points along the northern border of the State, a force destined for the invasion of Mississippi.

The army of Tennessee had retired from Corinth and finally from the State, leaving only a few battalions of cavalry scattered from the Alabama line to the vicinity of Memphis and a single brigade of infantry—General Villipague's—stationed on the south bank of the Tallahatchie river, near where the Mississippi Central railroad crosses that stream. These forces could accomplish nothing beyond observing the movements of the enemy and protecting the country to some extent against small marauding parties. The country was teeming with immense supplies of bread-stuffs and forage; for no portion of the cotton States yielded finer crops, prior to the war, than North Mississippi, and its patriotic people had almost entirely abandoned the cultivation of cotton and devoted their energies to the production of grain. It became a matter of grave importance to avert or, at least, delay the threatened invasion, until these supplies could be transported to interior points for the use of the army. To accomplish that end, the Confederate authorities deter-

mined to assume the offensive and attempt the capture of Corinth before the arrival of Grant's hosts on the northern border of the State. An expedition was organized, consisting of a detachment from Bragg's army and such other forces as could be hastily gathered from various points, including Villipegue's brigade and a portion of the scattered cavalry already mentioned. The command of the expedition was entrusted to Major-General Earl Van Dorn. The regiment to which the writer belonged was ordered in the direction of Memphis, and did not accompany General Van Dorn. The attack on Corinth was made early in October, and failed. As the force employed was deemed adequate for the assault, many and diverse reasons for the failure were adduced by those who participated in the movement; but in the absence of all personal knowledge on the subject, none will be reproduced in this paper.

After his repulse at Corinth, General Van Dorn retired across the country to Holly Springs, to await the movement of the enemy which he had vainly tried to prevent. The troops, particularly the infantry, were much dispirited by hard marching and unsuccessful fighting, but fortunately a period of several weeks of inactivity ensued, affording ample opportunity for rest.

In the meantime, General Grant, reinforced by Sherman, who had recently returned to Memphis after an unsuccessful attack on Vicksburg, was massing a heavy force at various points on the Memphis and Charleston railroad. Early in November General Van Dorn retired across the Tallahatchie river with his infantry, artillery and wagon train, leaving the cavalry, General W. H. Jackson commanding, still posted north of Holly Springs. General Grant's advance was not as rapid as had been anticipated, but his heavy columns soon made their appearance. Our cavalry retired slowly, and, in a few days, rejoined the infantry near Oxford. So far no fighting had occurred, except a few unimportant skirmishes. The situation was gloomy. General Grant, with a magnificent army, 80,000 strong, was moving leisurely south through the interior of the State, repairing and using the railroad as he advanced. In front of him was about one-fourth of that number of dispirited Confederate troops and a crowd of fleeing citizens, carrying with them negroes, horses, mules, cattle, hogs and every imaginable kind of movable property.

After crossing the Tallahatchie, Grant's pursuit became more vigorous, and the multitude of refugees became a serious source of embarrassment, for their wagons had a knack of breaking down

just at the wrong places, thereby obstructing the movement of troops, particularly the artillery. The morning after the cavalry had rejoined General Van Dorn near Oxford, the enemy, now south of the river, commenced a rapid advance. Our infantry at once resumed their retreat in the direction of Water Valley, while the cavalry was ordered in the opposite direction to check the advance. About four miles north of Oxford the cavalry came in contact with a heavy force of the enemy, and a sharp skirmish ensued, resulting in our forces being driven back, but time enough was gained to enable the straggling infantry and refugees to evacuate Oxford. At an early hour, before the advance of the enemy was reported, the squadron to which the writer belonged had received orders to reconnoitre the Panola road to a point fifteen miles distant, and in the event no enemy was encountered to return to Oxford during the night. Not hearing the firing of the affair of the morning, and not meeting any enemy, we moved quietly forward, reached the point named in our orders, remained until late in the afternoon, and returned to Oxford. The night was exceedingly dark, and the town seeming remarkably quiet, it occurred to the officer in command that it might be prudent to halt and send forward a scout, who soon returned with the startling information that the enemy was in possession of the place. We countermarched as quietly as possible, flanked the town, and by riding all night succeeded in joining our regiment the next morning. The enemy continued to advance rapidly, resulting in another sharp cavalry fight at Water Valley, in which we were again outnumbered and roughly handled. Two days later at Coffeeville, the tables were turned.

As they had done at Oxford and Water Valley, the enemy commenced a headlong advance as they neared the town of Coffeeville. The movement had been anticipated, and our forces had been well posted to receive the onset. Their advance consisted of what was known as the Kansas Jayhawkers, who enjoyed the reputation of being the most expert plunderers connected with Grant's army. They came forward with a rush and a yell, expecting, as it was afterwards ascertained, to take the town by a coup d'etat, and have the pillaging all to themselves.

Our line was so posted as to be concealed from view until the enemy were within a few feet of it, and the first intimation they had of its presence was a deadly volley, instantly followed by a splendid charge, which swept them back like chaff before the wind, until it became too dark to distinguish friend from foe. The

most remarkable feature of the affair was the singularly prompt and salutary effect it produced in quieting the enemy. No other advance was attempted, and during the next two or three weeks—in fact, until the commencement of General Grant's retrograde movements—the most perfect quiet prevailed between the lines.

The situation was now as follows: General Jackson, with the Confederate cavalry, held the country between Grenada and Coffeeville. The infantry had crossed the Yalobusha at Grenada, and occupied defensive positions along the south bank of the river. General Van Dorn had been superseded by General Pemberton. A few reinforcements were added to the force about the time General Pemberton assumed command, but the whole was entirely inadequate to cope with General Grant.

The main body of the Federal army was encamped near Water Valley, with advance outposts in the vicinity of Coffeeville. It seemed to have no rear, for strong detachments were posted all along the railroad, as far as our scouts had gone, and were known to extend as far north as Holly Springs. General Grant was accumulating an immense depot of supplies at Holly Springs; was repairing the railroad south of that place and hastening every preparation necessary for a continuation of his advance. To arrest his progress was a matter of vital importance, otherwise the whole interior of the State, its capital, Vicksburg, and its railroads would fall into his possession. The force in his front being insufficient to offer battle with any hope of success, the only other alternative—that of attacking his communications—was adopted.

On the 15th of December the main body of the Confederate cavalry was quietly withdrawn from the enemy's front and crossed to the south side of the Yalobusha.

At 11 o'clock that night we received orders to be ready to move at daylight, with sixty rounds of ammunition and ten days' rations of salt. Many were the speculations indulged in by men and officers around the camp-fires in regard to our destination; but on one point all were agreed, that the order meant an end to the monotonous duty of waiting and watching for Grant's advance.

At daylight the column moved eastward up the Yalobusha river, and soon after sunrise it became known for the first time that General Van Dorn was riding at its head.

Prior to that time the cavalry had seen but little of General Van Dorn, and the most of them knew nothing of their leader, except



as they saw him on the morning of the 16th of December—a man apparently about forty years of age, small of stature, dark skinned, dark haired, bright, keen black eyes, clear cut and well defined features, straight as an Indian, sitting his horse like a knight, and looking every inch a soldier. Such was the man, who, four days later, with less than twenty-five hundred poorly mounted and badly equipped cavalry, dealt Grant a blow which sent him and his splendidly appointed army of 80,000 reeling back to their transports at Memphis.

During the entire day and most of the night of the 16th the command moved steadily forward in the direction of Houston, which place was reached about noon on the 17th. Up to this time conjecture had gradually settled down to the opinion that our destination was some point on the Mobile and Ohio railroad, but on leaving the town of Houston the head of the column was observed to turn north in the direction of Pontotoc, and again we were at sea. We bivouacked that night about fifteen miles north of Houston, and fed our horses from the adjacent corn fields.

On the following day, as the rear of the column was leaving Pontotoc, a regiment of Federal cavalry entered the town from a different direction. Had we been a few moments later, or they a little earlier, a collision would have been inevitable, and would, probably, have resulted in the loss of valuable time; as it was, only a few shots were exchanged between their advance and some loiterers of our rear guard. We were now nearer to General Grant's headquarters than to Holly Springs, yet it is singularly true that this force failed to notify the Federal commander that a considerable body of cavalry was moving rapidly in the direction of his depot of supplies. Their conduct cannot be accounted for on the hypothesis that they were not aware of the presence of a superior force, for their rapid and disorderly flight demonstrated that they fully appreciated the importance of taking care of themselves.

General Grant's headquarters were connected with the posts in his rear by telegraph, and any intimation of danger would have been quickly flashed over the wires; but it seems this regiment was too badly scared to think of anything except their own safety, for they strewed the road for miles with property which had been taken from citizens.

Arriving at New Albany at dark on the evening of the 18th, we crossed the Tallahatchie and slept on the north bank. Early on the morning of the 19th the column was put in motion on a direct



but somewhat unused road to Holly Springs, distant thirty-five miles, and by noon had reached a point within fourteen miles of the town. As it was important to avoid coming in contact with any reconnoitring parties the enemy might have out, we were now halted until night. A careful inspection of arms and ammunition was made, the horses were fed, and at dark we were ordered to move forward in perfect silence; at midnight, the head of the column being within a mile of the enemy's pickets, the men were ordered to dismount and rest in place.

It was a warm, star-light, December night, and oppressively silent. Even our horses seemed to comprehend the situation, for they quietly nodded in their places, while their riders, bridle rein in hand, enjoyed a brief rest on the ground at their feet.

There were various opinions in regard to the strength of the enemy. The sequel proved it consisted of a brigade of infantry and a portion of the Seventh Illinois cavalry—a force about equal in numbers to our own. The infantry was divided—a portion being camped near the railroad depot and very near where the road on which we were advancing entered the town; the balance were quartered in the centre of the town, occupying the courthouse and other buildings on and near the square. The cavalry occupied the fair grounds, immediately north of the town. The three positions were from a half to three-quarters of a mile from each other, and a simultaneous attack upon each would have necessitated the movement of a portion of the troops around the town, which, owing to the darkness and the nature of the ground, would have been impracticable.

There was no trouble about reaching the encampment first named, as that lay straight before us. To get at the other positions, General Van Dorn adopted the simpler plan of going through the town, instead of around it. By hurling his whole force straight at the enemy and entering their lines at one point, he would come in contact with only one picket-post and diminish the chances of alarming the garrison prematurely.

After passing the pickets and reaching certain designated points, the column, without abating its speed, was to divide into three attacking parties, the commander of each detachment being carefully instructed where to strike. The first or head of the column was to dash into and capture the infantry camped in front of us; the second, following immediately after the first, was to sweep by the encampment, move straight into the town until it reached the

street leading north to the fair grounds, then wheel to the right and charge the cavalry camp; the third, following immediately after the second, was to dash through the town, disregarding every thing until it struck the infantry occupying the public square. Everything indicated that the enemy had no suspicion of our approach. At daybreak the column was moved forward until within about two hundred yards of the pickets, when a staff officer pointed out their position and ordered us to ride them down without firing.

We moved forward at a trot, soon increased to a gallop, and when a turn in the road brought the pickets in view, they were standing peering at us through the gloom, evidently unable to decide whether we were friend or foe. A stern command from the officer in front to throw down their arms and get out of the road was quickly obeyed, and we passed them like the wind. Another turn in the road, and the white tents of the camp were in full view.

On a slight eminence near the road side, and within gun shot of the camp, were three or four horsemen; in passing them, General Van Dorn was recognized in the group, and was greeted with a tremendous cheer, which he gracefully acknowledged, and pointed to the enemy with his sword. The effect of the silent order was electrical; the charge was instantly turned into a steeple chase, and in another moment we struck the camp like a thunderbolt.

The sleeping Federals were partially aroused by the wild cheer given General Van Dorn, but before its echoes ceased to reverberate, we had literally ridden over them. The camp proved to be that of the One-hundred-and-first Illinois infantry. When the alarm was given, they rushed out of their tents, and taking in the situation at a glance, promptly commenced a series of manoeuvres, not laid down in tactics, to avoid being run over.

The scene of a regiment, with night garments fluttering to the breeze, trying to dodge an avalanche of horsemen, was truly laughable. Apparently there was no thought of resistance, and in a few moments the comedy ended without a shot being fired. The attack on the centre of the town was also a perfect success, although being a few moments later the surprise was not quite so complete. The cavalry at the fair grounds made a spirited defence. They were booted and saddled preparatory to starting on a scout when the alarm was given, and when Colonel Pinson, commanding the First Mississippi, dashed up to their camp, expecting to take it by surprise, he found them formed and ready to receive him. They met him with a counter charge, and a sharp fight ensued at close

quarters. A portion of the troops to whom the One-hundred-and-first Illinois had surrendered, were now ordered to the rear of the cavalry engaging Pinson to cut off their retreat. Just as we gained their rear and got in position, they discovered the movement and attempted to cut their way out.

It was a gallant but hopeless effort. Some succeeded in escaping by passing around the ends of our line, but all who attempted to cut through it fell or were captured. The conduct of one officer was particularly noticeable; he came riding furiously at our line, and when ordered to surrender, paid no attention to the summons except to draw his revolver and fire in our faces. His fire was returned, and he fell mortally wounded.

The fighting ended with the affair at the fair grounds, and before 8 o'clock General Van Dorn was in quiet possession of the town, with an immense quantity of army stores and a large number of prisoners on his hands. General Grant had accumulated at Holly Springs everything necessary to supply a large army during his contemplated campaign. Every available building at and near the depot, including the machine shops, round house and large armory and foundry buildings, and many houses on the public square, were filled with commissary, quartermaster and ordnance stores. In addition to these were numerous sutlers' shops, stocked with articles so well suited to the wants of Confederate soldiers, that they seemed to have been provided for their especial use. Army followers, with well assorted stocks of merchandise, holding permits and "protection papers" from the Federal Government to trade in cotton, had established themselves, and were ready for business, but, unfortunately for them, their "papers" afforded no sort of protection against hungry and needy "Rebels." Boots and hats seemed to be the most popular articles in the way of clothing, but it was amusing to see how tastes differed. Some men would pass by a dozen things which they really needed, and shouldering a bolt of calico, walk off apparently perfectly satisfied with their selection. Sugar, coffee, crackers, cheese, sardines, canned oysters, &c., were not neglected; sacks were filled with these articles and tied behind saddles, and when the column moved it presented the appearance of a long line of mill boys. Among the ordnance stores there was a large quantity of arms and equipments entirely new and in original packages, manufactured especially for cavalry, which that branch of the service did not fail to appropriate.

The captured property, with the exception of the comparatively

small quantity used in arming and equipping his command, General Van Dorn committed to the flames.

He has been censured for burning the buildings in which the property was stored, but there was no other plan he could have adopted. It must be remembered that he was under the shadow of a large, hostile army, while he occupied the town, and a considerable portion of his command had to be employed in guarding the prisoners, who were being paroled, and in covering the approaches of the enemy. He could not reasonably have hoped to hold his position long enough to have moved the stores out of the buildings and destroyed them with the force available for that purpose.

The explosion of the magazine and bursting of shells communicated fire to some buildings, which otherwise would have escaped being burned.

At sunset the work of destruction had been completed, the prisoners paroled, and the command moved out of town. In a few short hours, with a comparatively insignificant force, General Van Dorn had destroyed an accumulation of military supplies which it had taken months to collect from the factories and store-houses of the North. It was a terrible disaster to General Grant; and as censure had to rest on some one, Colonel Murphy, the commander of the post, was selected as the scapegoat. Incompetency, negligence, and all sorts of charges were brought against him. It was said that he was not sufficiently rigid in excluding citizens from his lines, and in that way General Van Dorn obtained the information which enabled him to effect a surprise; but when it is considered that there were numbers of men in his command whose homes were in and around Holly Springs, and who were perfectly familiar with every road and by-path in the country, it may readily be supposed that he did not have to rely on citizens for information.

Colonel Murphy's cavalry had been active and vigilant. There was no hostile force near the town at dark on the evening of the 19th. The attack on the morning of the 20th came like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, and under the circumstances was irresistible. Had Grant and every general in his army been present the result would probably have been the same. Mrs. Grant had established her headquarters in town; the General visited her frequently, and he must have known and been satisfied with the condition of affairs at the post. Holly Springs was connected with army headquarters by telegraph, and Colonel Murphy might very properly

have supposed that if any considerable portion of the enemy's cavalry were withdrawn from General Grant's front, and moved in the suspicious direction taken by Van Dorn, that some intimation of the fact would reach him. The truth is, that if Colonel Murphy was censurable at all, it was for sharing in the feeling which seemed to pervade the whole army from General Grant down, that the march through the State was simply to be a walk over the track.

Leaving Holly Springs, General Van Dorn moved north and crossed the Memphis and Charleston railroad at Moscow, for the purpose of making a diversion in favor of General Forrest, who was at the time engaged on an expedition in Middle and West Tennessee. After succeeding in monopolizing the attention of the enemy at various points for a day or two, we moved across to Bolivar, cut off and captured the pickets, and turned south just in time to avoid a heavy force of cavalry and artillery which Grant had sent in pursuit. We were now moving by the same route which the Federal cavalry had just followed going north, and astonished many of their stragglers by gobbling them up when they least expected it. The railroad south of Bolivar was guarded by small detachments of infantry, the most of whom were picked up and paroled. The cavalry which we had eluded early in the morning turned about and pursued, and came up with our rear at Salisbury late in the evening. Prisoners represented that the force consisted of about 4,000 picked troops, accompanied by light artillery; and as they manifested a disposition to push matters, it became necessary to outwit them. General Van Dorn moved out rapidly on the road leading to Corinth, the enemy pursuing. As soon as it became dark enough to conceal his movements, he turned the head of the column to the right through the woods and gained the Ripley road, leaving a portion of his rear guard and some scouts, with orders to continue to move forward on the Corinth road, just in advance of the enemy. The ruse succeeded, and soon after reaching the Ripley road we were ordered to camp without fires. The march was resumed early the next morning, and continued without interruption until the afternoon, when the enemy again made their appearance in our rear, and indulged in a little harmless shelling. We crossed to the south bank of the Tallahatchie, and went into camp, but they manifested no disposition to follow. The command arrived at Grenada about the 1st of January, having been absent two weeks. During that two weeks General Van Dorn had marched nearly 400

miles, had killed, wounded and captured more Federal troops than his own command numbered, had destroyed supplies amounting to millions of dollars, and had forced General Grant to abandon an elaborately planned campaign and retreat precipitately beyond the limits of the State. The Confederate loss in killed, wounded and missing did not exceed fifty.

Judged by the magnitude of its results, the capture of Holly Springs was the most important cavalry achievement of the war. The expedition greatly improved the morale of the cavalry, and laid the foundation for the formation of the splendid corps which General Van Dorn subsequently handled with such signal success. He believed in cavalry, and handled it on the theory that it could do anything which the best trained infantry could accomplish. His old troopers will well remember the notable instance of his confidence in them, exhibited at Franklin, Tennessee, a few days before his death. He had sent Forrest around north of Franklin to capture a detachment stationed at Brentwood, and to divert the attention of the garrison at Franklin from Forrest's movement, a demonstration was made on that place. As nothing more than a feint was intended, we were drawn up in front of the earthworks, and for some time a scattering fire was kept up between the skirmishers and batteries on both sides; finally the enemy grew bolder and moved a column of infantry out on a piece of open ground and formed them into a hollow square, apparently for the purpose of inviting a charge. This was too much for a man of General Van Dorn's temperment. Without a moment's hesitation he ordered a charge. The ground was favorable, and the line swept forward in splendid order; for a moment it looked as though the blue square would stand, then it wavered, and at last broke and fled in disorder.

General Van Dorn possessed, in an eminent degree, the qualities essential to success in a cavalry commander, and his untimely death was an irreparable loss to the Southern cause.

A. F. BROWN.

*Holly Springs, Mississippi, August, 1878.*



**Presentation of Army of Tennessee Badge and Certificate of Membership to Ex-President Davis.**

The Louisiana Division of the Association of the Army of Tennessee did itself credit in their excursion to Mississippi City for the purpose of presenting a badge and certificate of membership to ex-President Jefferson Davis. The ceremonies were of deep interest, but we have only space for the presentation address and Mr. Davis' reply.

ADDRESS OF COLONEL JAMES LINGAN, PRESIDENT OF THE  
ASSOCIATION.

*Comrades of the Army of Tennessee, Ladies and Gentlemen:* We have met here to-day for the purpose of tendering a testimonial of our hearts, our warm hearts' affection, and of our respect for one upon whom in the past the people of the South have heaped every honor and power within the gift of a free people.

We have assembled here for the purpose of looking back on the past, in order to learn a lesson for the future. We have assembled for the purpose of doing honor to the past, reviving memories of the dead and paying honor to the living. At the graves of our dead comrades we have no bitterness to cherish; we look rather towards the future for the realization of the hopes lost to them, preserved to us in a prosperous and successful country. We can honor the living without inciting any of the antagonism of the past, because, throughout its length and breadth, the country, from the Rio Grande to its northernmost part, has rung with the name of him whom we meet here to-day to honor. It is not alone the ordeal through which we have passed together that we are called upon to-day to memorize, because the name of Jefferson Davis long before the war between the sections was a name honored and revered throughout the land, a name at which every man felt proud of his country and his manhood.

It would, therefore, be in bad grace for any one to say that the people of the South could not to-day do honor to him without reopening questions or issues, or feelings or prejudices, which we, at least, desire forever to be buried in the past.

You, Mr. Davis, I am instructed by the Association of the Army of Tennessee to inform, that at a regular meeting of our association you have been elected an honorary member.

On behalf of that association I hand you this engraved certificate of membership, and inasmuch as many here will perhaps not be able to see it in person, I will read the description.

[Colonel Lingan here read the certificate of membership, which runs as follows:

THE ASSOCIATION OF THE ARMY OF TENNESSEE.

*To whom it may concern:*

We do hereby declare and certify that JEFFERSON DAVIS entered the military service of the Confederate States of America as President and Commander-in-Chief, which position



he filled with unswerving fidelity and patriotism—undismayed by disaster and unbegulled by temporary success. That he met the obloquy of utter and final defeat, as he has the later shafts of detraction, with the patient, dignified bearing of a Christian gentleman and a hero, without reply, save in the language of a calm and philosophic statesmanship, and that in commemoration of his personal and official virtues he has been unanimously elected an honorary member of the Louisiana Division of the Association of the Army of Tennessee, and upon due proof of the above military record, has been awarded this certificate.

In testimony whereof we have hereunto set our hand and affixed the seal of the association this tenth day of July, 1878.

JOHN C. GOLDING, *Secretary.*]

JAMES LINGAN, *President.*

In addition to this, Mr. Davis, [Colonel Lingan continued] I am instructed to present to you, on behalf of the association, this badge of membership. It is inscribed: "Jefferson Davis, from the Louisiana Division of the Army of Tennessee, July 10, 1878." There is on it the monogram of the Confederate States, Army of Tennessee. There is a battle flag of the Confederacy.

You will recognize the blue cross on the red field, and the Pelican, the coat of arms of Louisiana, in the centre. We present this, Mr. Davis, to you from the affection which we all bear to you personally, and from the great veneration and esteem which we have for you as a representative of our principles and rights under the constitution of our country, that are as true to-day as they were on the day when the issue was made. We believe that from the time when you espoused those principles in early manhood, you have been faithful to every trust imposed upon you by the people of the country; and we believe that in the future the time will come when that record will be endorsed by every man, woman and child in the country, from one end to the other.

ADDRESS OF HON. JEFFERSON DAVIS.

The gratitude felt for your kindness, and the appreciation of the honor you have conferred, are doubly dear to me. Dear, as they are an expression of your friendship and esteem, and not less dear as they are an exponent of the magnanimity of those who have much of sorrow and sacrifice to remember in connection with the period of my administration.

The history of the world is full of examples where rewards and honors and public appreciation have waited on the successful, and where condemnation followed failure; with little discrimination in either case as to the merit or demerit of the conduct applauded or condemned. To you, my countrymen, belongs the distinction of presenting an exception to the rule.

You come to-day to confer a badge and order on one endeared to you by our common misfortune, and especially regarded by you because he has been the particular object of the hate and unwearying slander of his and your enemies. I am cordially thankful for this kindness and proud to be enrolled in an association of men whose opinions and friendships do not veer with the changing tides of fortune. Your organization was appropriate, if not needful, to

preserve the memories and cherished brotherhoods of your soldier life, and cannot be objectionable to any, unless it be to one who holds your services to have been in an unworthy cause and your conduct such as called for repentance and forgiveness. The weary march, the picket, the ill-supplied camp, the heart-depressing hospital, as well as the battle field, afford numerous occasions to call forth the generosity and fidelity of soldier friends, and of all the tenderest memories and closest and strongest ties these are perhaps the most enduring. But to sanctify these friendships there must be pride as well in the cause as in the conduct. The veteran who shouldered his crutch to show how fields were won must not be ashamed of the battle in which he was wounded. To higher natures success is not the only test of merit; and you, my friends, though you were finally unsuccessful, have the least possible cause to regret the flag under which you marched or the manner in which you upheld it. Under provocation the bitterest and oft-repeated, yours was never the policy of retaliation. While your homes were laid waste and your families often left destitute, the peaceful home of an enemy suffered not at your hands; nor had the non-combatants cause to tremble at your coming, either in their body or estate. There were some who were not with our marching armies that advocated raising the black flag, but you preferred to share your canteen with the wounded enemy and your half ration with a hungry prisoner. In the heat of the conflict, I commended this exhibition of magnanimity on the part of our soldiers in a general order, and remember with pride the chivalry which called it forth. It were needless to recall the instances of cruel and unmanly conduct of the enemy towards the aged men and helpless women and children of our land; if it were possible to forget, it were well such acts were forgotten. The noblest have most power to forgive, and the meanest are most revengeful. The first is best able to return good for evil; that is your part, and your past conduct shows how well you were able to meet the requirement.

As an original question, the propriety of exercising the State right of secession in 1861 was at least debatable, but the course pursued by the Federal Government, after the war had ceased, vindicates the judgment of those who held separation to be necessary for the safety and freedom of the Southern States. The unsuccessful attempt to separate left those in power to work their will, as it had been manifested when they first got control of the Government. The events are too recent to require recapitulation, and the ruin they have wrought, the depravity they have developed, require no other memorial than the material and moral wreck which the country presents.

Permit me to say of the controverted question of secession by a State from the Union, of which it was a member by compact, voluntarily made, that my faith in that right as an inherent attribute of State sovereignty, was adopted early in life, was confirmed by the study and observation of later years, and has passed, unchanged

and unshaken, through the severe ordeal to which it has been subjected.

Without desire for a political future, only anxious for the supremacy of the truths on which the Union was founded, and which I believe to be essential to the prosperity and the liberties of the people, it is little to assume that I shall die, as I have lived, firm in the State rights faith.

In other times and places I have discussed the right of a State to withdraw from the Union, and will not repeat the argument on this occasion.

Suffice it to say, the historical facts from which the right is deducible can only be overthrown by the demolition of the principles on which the government of our fathers was ordained and established. The independence and sovereignty of the State carried with it the obligation of the allegiance of the citizen to his State. To refuse to defend it when invaded would be treason. To respond to its call and go forth with those who "hung the banner on the outer wall," was a legal duty and obligation to his home, and all it held dear—alike binding on the father, the brother, the son and the citizen. The propriety of engaging in war is a question open to debate; but, when it has been entered on, to shrink from its trials and responsibilities is a crime, which in all ages has been denounced by the patriotic and the brave.

It is questionable whether war is ever justifiable except for defence, and then it is surely a duty. No calling or condition in life exempts the citizen from service where his countrymen think he can be useful. Thus the good Bishop Polk reasoned before entering the army, after solemn meditation and prayer, for he told me, before doing so, that he regarded the war as *pro aris et focis*, and that his calling required rather than excluded him from serving, wherever and however he was most needed. This holy man, with pious thought, buckled on his sword, and how heroically he bore himself on many battle fields, you, the survivors of the Army of Tennessee, can best bear witness. Throughout his arduous service he continued his ministerial functions, instructing as well by precept as example, while, ever mindful of Him in whose hands is the destiny of man, he prayerfully invoked God's favor on the righteous cause he righteously supported. When he fell on the field of battle, slain, like pious Abel, by his brother, the earth never drank nobler blood than his, and no purer spirit ever ascended to the Father.

Martyrdom has generally been accepted, and surely with reason, as proof of the sanctity of the cause for which the martyr died. Time would not serve to enumerate even a small part of the examples furnished by your prayerful army, of pious service and pious death in battle, but pride and affection will not allow me to leave them all to silent memory. The Greek who defended the pass and the Roman who held for a time the bridge have been immortalized in song and story. Yet neither of these performed a more heroic deed than did Tilghman, the commander of Fort

Henry. To save his command from capture, he and a handful of equally devoted followers served the few guns they had in the fort, and delayed the comparatively vast force and armament attacking them until his brigade, thus covered, could retreat upon Fort Donelson. At last, when his defences were breached, he surrendered with the surviving remnant of the gallant little band, who had offered themselves a willing sacrifice on the altar of their country, and went to that torture, mental and physical, which any of you who had the misfortune to be a prisoner know how to estimate.

Close by in time and space was another example of patriotic and soldierly devotion, which you will not value the less for not having been crowned with victory—the defence of Fort Donelson, on which depended the possibility of holding our line in Southern Kentucky and the safety of Nashville.

Relying on constitutional guarantees and restrictions, the South had not prepared for the war before taking the step which led to it. Therefore it was not possible to supply you with the clothing and shelter needful in the extraordinary cold and sleet, nor to garnish the work you defended with an armament and munitions at all comparable to that of your assailants; yet to the world it is known, and will long be remembered, how gallantly you held the position, and the desperate efforts which you made to cut your way through the investing force.

I am sure you will anticipate me in paying a tribute to the soldierly conduct of the true-hearted Buckner, who, when the command devolved upon him, refused to follow the example which had been set him, and declared his purpose to remain and share the fate of the men, whatever it might be. That wise and far-seeing soldier, Sidney Johnston, had correctly measured the value of holding the position of Fort Donelson. From the few troops with which he held the line of Green river, he made a detachment to reinforce the garrison of Fort Donelson. When that fort fell, and the fact became apparent, which he so long skillfully concealed from both friend and foe, of the small number of troops under his immediate command, retreat beyond the Cumberland became inevitable. Time has revealed how nobly you bore those disappointments and reverses, and still remained true to your colors; and I am sure your conduct on that occasion must ever be held in grateful remembrance by your countrymen.

The carpet knights, who, like Job's war horse, snuffed the battle from afar, but, unlike the war horse, neighed not with impatience to engage the enemy, but from afar off criticised and derided every failure, without caring to inquire, and perhaps without capacity to comprehend, the cause thereof, added to your regrets for the unavoidable, and the painful memories of all you had dared, suffered and lost, the bitter sting of unjust censure and ingratitude. Yet it is a memorable fact, that, though leaving your homes and wives and children behind, you closed your ears to their pitiful cries and circled deep around your commander, who richly deserved and had acquired your confidence in his ability to defend the country

and his willingness to sacrifice himself for it. Was it that his grand presence inspired you with unmeasured confidence and the hope of happier days when opportunity should offer? or was it that your judgment told you that you followed, as I verily believe you did, the greatest soldier, the ablest man, civil or military, Confederate or Federal, then living? He seemed about to fulfill these hopes and expectations, when, concentrating all the forces within his reach, he moved forward to the battle of Shiloh. General Johnston sent to me a cipher dispatch, being his plan of battle, and I regret the loss of it the more, because it was the only instance within my knowledge of a plan which was executed as it was devised. How well the tide of battle rose and swept onward in the channels his great arm directed, I need not say to you who saw it. When at last an obstinate resistance stayed the steady progress of our lines, Johnston rode to the point of danger, to lead his men to the capture of what was believed to be the last point to be carried. There, and in the performance of that supreme duty, your great leader received the wound which proved mortal. A prompt attention would have prevented a fatal result, but his heart was all his country's, his only thought was of his duty—he remembered not himself.

[Mr. Davis here read a beautiful tribute to General Johnston, which has been often published.]

There have been those who supposed he had been goaded into recklessness and had thrown away his life. As a friend who had known him intimately through all the years of our manhood, had served with him in barracks and in battle, I lay claim to more than ordinary ability to judge of his motives under any given state of facts, and unhesitatingly reject the supposition as unjust to his nature and refuted by the testimony of his whole life. When he left his command in California to cross the continent on horseback and join the Confederacy, he came without herald, without pretension or claim for high rank from the Confederate Government. He simply offered himself to the cause. When he arrived in Richmond, he came unexpectedly to my residence, where I was ill, confined to my bed and unable to receive visitors. When he entered the hall, I recognized his step and sent to have him shown up. He came, and by his accession I felt strengthened and reassured, knowing that a great support had thereby been added to the Confederate cause. When he fell, I realized that our strongest pillar had been broken.

I will not follow you through your long career of honorable service, or pause to exult with you over the battle fields rendered illustrious by your victories, but cannot forbear expressing the hope that some competent person will give to the world a full history of the Army of Tennessee. Yet, before leaving the subject, I wish to mention one of the many proofs I saw of your efficiency and valor. On the field of Chicamauga, where you achieved a brilliant victory under that true patriot and able soldier, General Bragg, it was noticeable, after the conflict, to see the side of the

trees next to the enemy riddled with balls and shot from the ground to a very great height, while on the Confederate side the trees were but little marked and the marks were near to the ground. The number of the killed and wounded show how calmly you selected the object and how well your balls obeyed your will.

Now, let us look further to the South and West, where the great problem was to keep control of the Mississippi river. After New Orleans and Island No. 10 had been captured, the problem was narrowed to preserving the section between Port Hudson and Vicksburg. While this was held, communication was possible with the Trans-Mississippi, upon which we much relied for a supply of provisions. This section was also requisite for co-operation between the troops of the east and the west sides of the river.

Long and well did the little garrison of Port Hudson maintain its position, and the siege of Vicksburg will ever be memorable for the duration of the defence of an unfortified place against a well appointed and numerically vastly superior army. The heroic deeds of the defenders and the long bombardment and frequent assaults on their hastily constructed entrenchments will, when better understood, shed imperishable lustre on General Pemberton and his gallant army; nor less, in time to come, will the unflinching devotion and self-denial of the citizens be gratefully remembered. For a long time after the siege sight-seers came to gaze at the caves which had been dug for the protection of the women and children. However, by such inspection little was to be learned of the privations and dangers voluntarily endured by the gentle but heroic sufferers. Here, and everywhere, the unanimity of our people proved the thoroughness of their conviction of the rectitude of our cause. We have been accustomed, and justly, too, to give unmeasured praise for the sacrifices made by our Revolutionary ancestors for the cause of self-government and the independence which had been declared. But there was no such unanimity among the colonists as was shown by our people in their effort to maintain the liberties their fathers had secured and transmitted to them. Then organized bodies of Tories combated, with doubtful result, the troops of the States in revolution. Among us there was no organized resistance, and but few cases of individual defection. This, at least, shows that our cause was not less dear or less worthy of a people's love than theirs.

Let no one suppose that in thus vindicating our cause, in paying due tribute to your gallant deeds, and in commending the heroic fortitude of your mothers, your wives, your sisters and your daughters, I am seeking to disturb such peace as we have, or to avoid the logic of events. You have done your duty in the past, and I would ask no more than that you should fulfill equally well the duties of the present and the future. The bravest are, as a rule, the gentlest, and they are also the truest to every obligation assumed by them. You struck for independence and were unsuccessful. You agreed to return to the Union, and abide by the constitution and the laws made in conformity with it. Thus far, no farther, do



I understand your promise to extend. It does not require you to accept a fraud in the title to office, nor, because a man calls himself a "statesman," to admit his right to legitimize bribery and perjury.

Wars of conquest, like the convulsive heaving of an earthquake, displace the proper order of constituent elements, and bringing the dregs of society to the surface check both material and moral progress. But this evil in a country where the people rule, must have an inherent remedy. Bad laws, badly administered, impair the prosperity and happiness of the masses, and their interest must teach them that corruption and fraud may enrich the few, but does so by impoverishing the many.

Ignorance and unbridled passion in legislation may not enrich the few, but must make the many poor indeed. To which of these causes is to be referred the extraordinary legislation of the Congresses which followed the war, it is left to others to decide. The tax-payers know that an increased burden was imposed on them by the changes made in the contracts with the bondholders. The merchants and ship-owners know that we have lost the carrying-trade; and to what will they assign a policy which prevents the reregistration of an American ship that had changed her flag during the war, which imposes such duties on the raw material as to interfere with ship-building, and prohibits the registration of a foreign built ship, though it be, by purchase, the property of a citizen of the United States?

Will the people, if worthy the source of all power, allow a long continuance of such palpable wrongs to the masses—such ruin to interests which have been equally our pride and means of prosperity?

A form of government must correspond to the character of the people for which it is appropriate. It is therefore that republics have failed whenever corruption entered the body politic and rendered the people unworthy to rule. Then they become the fit subjects of despotism, and a despot is always at hand to respond to the call. A Cæsar could not subjugate a people who were fit to be free; nor could a Brutus save them, if they were fit for subjugation.

The fortitude with which our people have borne the oppression imposed on them since the war was closed; the resolute will with which they have struggled against poverty and official pillage, is their highest glory and gives the best assurance of final triumph.

Well may we rejoice in the regained possession of local self-government, in the power of the people to choose their representatives and to legislate uncontrolled by bayonets. This is the great victory, and promises another as the sequence to it, a total non-interference by the Federal Government with the domestic affairs of the States. The revival of the time-honored doctrine of State sovereignty and the supremacy of the law will secure permanent peace, freedom and prosperity. The constitution of the United States, interpreted as it was by those who made it, is the prophet's rod to sweeten the bitter water from which flowed the strife, the carnage,



the misery and the shame of the past, as well as the foils of the present.

Every evil which has befallen our institutions is directly traceable to the perversion of the compact of union and the usurpation by the Federal Government of undelegated powers. Let one memorable example suffice for illustration. When Missouri asked for admission as a State into the Union, to which she had a two-fold right under the constitution and usages of the United States, and also under the terms of the treaty by which the territory was acquired, her application was resisted, and her admission was finally purchased by the unconstitutional concession, misnamed the "Missouri Compromise." When that establishment of a politico-geographical line was announced to the apostle of Democracy, who, full of years and honors, in retirement, watched with profound solicitude the course of the government he had so mainly contributed to inaugurate, his prophetic vision saw the end, of which this was the beginning. The news fell upon his ear "like a fire bell at night."

Men had differed and would differ about measures and public policy, according to their circumstances or mental characteristics. Such differences tended to the elucidation of truth, the triumph of reason over error. Parties so founded would not be sectional; but when the Federal Government made a parallel of latitude a political line, sectional party could not fulfill the ends for which the Union was ordained and established. If the limitations of the constitution had been observed, and its purposes had directed Federal legislation, no such act could have been passed; the lid of the Pandora box might have remained closed, and the country have escaped the long train of similar aggressions which aggrandized one section, impoverished the other, and, adding insult to injury, finally destroyed the fraternity which had bound them together.

It was no part of my purpose, as has been already shown, to discuss the politics of the day, though the deep interest I must ever feel in the affairs of the country has not allowed me to ignore them, and will not permit me to be unobservant of passing events, or indifferent to the humiliating exposures to which the Federal Government has of late been subjected. Separated from any active participation in public affairs, I may not properly judge of those who have to bear the heat and burden of the day. Representing no one, it would be quite unreasonable to hold any other responsible for the opinions which I may entertain. How or when a restoration of the government to the principles and practices of its earlier period may be accomplished, it is not given to us to foresee. For me it remains only earnestly to hope, and hopefully to believe, though I may not see it, that the restoration will come. To disbelieve this, is to discredit the popular intelligence and integrity on which self-government must necessarily depend. Though severely tried, my faith in the people is not lost, and I prayerfully trust, though I should not live to see the hope realized, that it will be permitted to me to die believing that the principles on which our

fathers founded their government will finally prevail throughout the land, and the ends for which it was instituted yet be attained and rendered as perpetual as human institutions may be.

I have said we could not foresee how or when this may be brought to pass, but it is not so difficult to determine what means are needful to secure the result. First in order and importance, for it is the corner stone of the edifice, the elective franchise must be intelligently and honestly exercised. Let there be no class legislation, low taxes, low salaries, no perquisites; and let the official be held to a strict accountability to his constituents. Nepotism and gift-taking by a public agent deserves severest censure, and the bestowal of the people's office as a reward for partisan service should be regarded as a gross breach of trust. Let not such offences be condoned; for, in a government of the people there can be no abuses permissible as usefully counteracting each other. Truth and justice and honor presided at the birth of our Federal Union, and its mission can only be performed by their continual attendance upon it. For this there is not needed a condition of human perfectibility, but only so much of virtue as will control vice and teach the mercenary and self-seeking that power and distinction and honor will be awarded to patriotism, capacity and integrity.

To you, self-sacrificing, self-denying defenders of imperishable truths and inalienable rights, I look for the performance of whatever man can do for the welfare and happiness of his country.

In the language of a gifted poet of Mississippi—

“It is not for thee to falter,  
It is not for thee to palter,  
In this crisis—for thy mission is the mightiest of Time;  
It is thine to lead a legion,  
Cut of every realm and region,  
In the glorious march sunward to the golden heights sublime.”

Father Ryan was then called out and made an eloquent address, in which he paid a high tribute to the patriotism, service and personal character of Mr. Davis—saying, among other things, that during his long and distinguished public career he had never once been investigated.

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**Gettysburg—The Battle on the Right.**

By Colonel WM. C. OATES, of Alabama.

[If any of our readers are weary of our "Gettysburg Series," we will say for their comfort that we have probably nearly reached the end. But we have, from all parts of this country and from Europe, the warmest expressions of interest in these papers and high appreciation of their great historic value. The article which follows treats of movements which have not yet been fully detailed, and will be found to be a very readable paper.]

I have read with deep interest the historical articles contributed to the press within the last twelve months by writers from different sections of the Union, but none of them have interested me so much as those on the Pennsylvania campaign and the battle of Gettysburg, because I have always regarded the battle as the turning-point in the great struggle—"the war between the States"—which culminated in the overthrow of the Confederacy. I am not a fatalist, nor a believer in destiny, and hence cannot say of Gettysburg, as Victor Hugo did of Waterloo, "that God passed over the battle field." I believe in responsibility for human conduct, and although the Federals greatly outnumbered the Confederates, yet the disparity was not so great as on many other fields where the latter had been completely victorious. The army under Lee was never much stronger numerically, nor its condition better than at Gettysburg. The rank and file were never more confident of success. I therefore conclude that some one "blundered." Modesty would dictate to me silence in the discussion of the great battle, but the truth of history can be vindicated only by bringing all the testimony before the impartial reader. Mine is of no great importance as to the humble part I bore, but from the position I happened to occupy on the field, I do know some facts which have an important bearing on the question of responsibility for the failure of the Confederates to win the battle. The campaign may have been an unwise or ill-advised one, but General Lee, in his nobleness of soul, put that question beyond discussion by assuming, more than was chargeable to him, the entire responsibility of the failure. General Early, Colonel Taylor and others have charged General Longstreet with the loss of the battle, and he has, with much ingenuity, attempted a refutation of the charge; and has, perhaps, to the minds of most men, at least partially, succeeded. Their charges are based upon his disobedience of orders to attack the Federals early on the morning of the 2d of July, and upon his inactivity and

slothfulness in making the attack that day; and General Early also charges him with failing to give the Commanding-General that hearty and cordial support that was necessary to success. As to the truth and justness of the first two of these allegations, General Longstreet, if his statements are to be believed, seems to have answered pretty successfully. And while I have not sufficient personal knowledge to speak of any of these charges, and have formed my conclusions as to them from the statements of facts and arguments of the respective parties, I believe at least that General Early's charge as to the failure to give proper support is true. General Longstreet had advised against the campaign and the battle, and by his own showing his heart was not in it.

In my opinion, while all these charges may be true, on a different ground, independent of them, he is responsible for the loss of the battle, and that ground cannot be fairly designated by any other term than that of the *want of generalship*.

I commanded one of the five Alabama infantry regiments of Brigadier-General Law's brigade of Hood's division, Longstreet's corps. As to when the division left Chambersburg, I don't pretend to know, for Law's brigade was on picket some three or four miles southeast of that town on the 1st day of July, when, in the afternoon, the cannonading of the engagement between portions of Ewell's and Hill's corps and the Federals under Reynolds, Howard and Doubleday, near Gettysburg, was distinctly heard by us. About dark we received an order to be ready to move at any moment. Subsequently, we were ordered to cook rations and be ready to move at 4 o'clock A. M. When that hour came, the brigade was put in motion, and after a rapid and fatiguing march, it arrived on the field within sight of Gettysburg at about 2 o'clock P. M., having marched, as I now recollect, between twenty and twenty-five miles. When we arrived, Generals Lee and Longstreet were together on an eminence in our front, and appeared to be inspecting, with field glasses, the positions of the Federals. We were allowed but a few minutes' rest, when the divisions of McLaws and Hood were moved in line by the right flank around to the south of the Federal position. There was a good deal of delay on the march, which was quite circuitous; I suppose, for the purpose of covering the movement from the enemy.

Finally, Hood marched across the rear of McLaws and went into line on the crest of a little ridge, with Benning's brigade in rear of his centre, constituting a second line—his battalion of artillery, six-

teen pieces, in position on his left. McLaws then formed his division of four brigades in two lines of battle on Hood's left, and with sixteen pieces of artillery in position on McLaws' left.

This line was in the general direction of the Emmettsburg road and nearly parallel with it—the extreme right of Hood's line being directly opposite to the centre of the Round Top mountain. Law's brigade constituted the right of Hood's line, and was formed in single line as follows: my regiment, the Fifteenth Alabama, in the centre; the Forty-fourth and Forty-eighth Alabama regiments to my right, and the Forty-seventh and Fourth Alabama regiments to my left. Thus formed, between three and four o'clock P. M., both battalions of artillery opened fire; the Federals replied. Then our whole line advanced in quick time, under the fire of our guns, through the valley which lay spread out before us at the foot of the range of mountains or hills, with a small muddy, meandering stream running through it near midway. The reports of some of the Federal officers and newspaper correspondents claim that our advance was in two lines or a double line of battle. I presume this was true as to McLaws' division and a portion of Hood's; but there was no line in rear of Law's brigade. There were no reserves and no supports or reliefs in its rear; if there were any, I never saw them at any time, and I am confident there were none. When crossing the little run we received the first fire from the Federal infantry, posted behind a stone fence near the foot of Round Top mountain. Our line did not halt, but pressing forward drove our enemy from the fence and up the side of the mountain. Just at this point General Law marched the Forty-fourth and Forty-eighth regiments by the left flank across my rear to the support of Robertson's Texas brigade, which was said to have been hard pressed at that time and unable to advance further without reinforcements. This left my regiment on the extreme right flank of Lee's army, and as I advanced up the mountain side my right was soon exposed to a flank fire from Federal skirmishers, which I promptly met by deploying my right company at short distance. I continued to advance straight up the southern face of Round Top. My men had to climb up, catching to the bushes and crawling over the immense boulders, in the face of an incessant fire of their enemy, who kept falling back, taking shelter and firing down on us from behind the rocks and crags that covered the mountain side thicker than grave stones in a city cemetery. My men could not see their foe, and did not fire, except as one

was seen here and there, running back from one boulder to another. In this manner I pressed forward until I reached the top and the highest point on top of Round Top. Just before reaching this point, the Federals in my front as suddenly disappeared from my sight as though commanded by a magician. From the top of the mountain a Federal soldier could not be seen, except a few wounded and dead ones on the ground over which we had advanced. Here I halted and permitted my men to lie down to rest. The Forty-seventh Alabama regiment was on my immediate left—had kept in line with me during the ascent and halted in line with my regiment on Round Top. The Fourth Alabama was to the left of the Forty-seventh, and was not on the top, but on the side of Round Top, towards and perhaps as far as Vincent Spur. During my halt, which continued less than ten minutes, from about Vincent Spur along to the left and about the foot and southern face of Little Round Top, the battle was raging furiously. I think not more than five minutes after I halted, Captain Terrell, A. A. G. to General Law, rode up and inquired why I had halted. I told him that the position I then occupied was, in my opinion, a very important one, and should be held by us. He informed me that the order was to press forward. I replied that some of my men, from heat and exhaustion, were fainting, and could fight a great deal better after a few minutes of rest, and inquired for General Law. He then informed me that General Hood was wounded and that Law, who was the senior brigadier, was in command of the division, and was along the line somewhere to the left, and said that General Law's order was for me and Colonel Bulger to lose no time, but to press forward and drive the enemy before us as far as possible. To move then was against my judgment. I felt confident that General Law did not know my position, or he would not order me from it, and this was my reason for inquiring for him. I had not seen him nor any other general officers after crossing the branch at the foot of the mountain, and am confident that no Confederate general nor staff officer, other than Captain Terrell, ascended Round Top at any time during the engagement. In fact, I saw no general officer until the morning of the 3d of July. But notwithstanding my conviction of the importance of holding Round Top and occupying it with artillery, which I endeavored to communicate to General Law through Captain Terrell, I considered it to be my duty to obey the order communicated to me by the latter, who was a trustworthy and gallant officer. I ordered my line for-



ward, and passed to the left oblique entirely down the northern or northeastern side of Round Top without encountering any opposition whatever. After I had reached the level ground in rear of Vincent's Spur, in plain view of the Federal wagon trains, and within two hundred yards of an extensive park of Federal ordnance wagons, which satisfied me that I was then in the Federal rear, advancing rapidly, without any skirmishers in front, I saw no enemy until within forty or fifty steps of an irregular ledge of rocks—a splendid line of breastworks formed by nature, running about parallel with the front of the Forty-seventh Alabama and my two left companies, and then sloping back in front of my centre and right at an angle of about thirty-five degrees. Our foes, who had so suddenly and mysteriously disappeared from Round Top, had evidently fallen back to a second line behind this ledge, and now, unexpectedly to us, this double line poured into us the most destructive fire I ever saw. Our line halted, but did not break. As men fell their comrades closed the gap, returning the fire most spiritedly. I soon discovered that the left of the Forty-seventh Alabama was disconnected—I know not how far—from the right of the Fourth Alabama, and consequently the Forty-seventh was outflanked on its left, and its men were being mowed down like grain before the scythe. Just at this time Lieutenant-Colonel Bulger, a most gallant old gentleman over sixty years of age, commanding the Forty-seventh Alabama, fell severely wounded, and soon afterwards his regiment, after behaving most gallantly and sustaining heavy losses, broke and in confusion retreated back up the mountain.

Just as the left of the Forty-seventh regiment was being driven back, I ordered my regiment to change direction to the left, swing around and drive the Federals from the ledge of rocks, partly for the purpose of enflading their line and relieving the Forty-seventh. My men obeyed, and advanced about half way to the enemy's position, but the fire was so destructive that my line wavered like a man trying to walk against a strong wind, and then, slowly, doggedly, gave back a little. Then, with no one upon the right or left of me, my regiment exposed, while the enemy was still under cover, to stand there and die was sheer folly; either to retreat or advance became a necessity. My Lieutenant-Colonel, J. B. Feagin, had lost his leg; the heroic Captain Ellison had fallen, while Captain Brainard, one of the bravest and best officers in the regiment, in leading his company forward, fell, exclaiming: "Oh God! that I



could see my mother," and instantly expired. Lieutenant John A. Oates, my beloved brother, was pierced through by eight bullets, and fell mortally wounded. Lieutenants Cody, Hill and Scoggin were killed, and Captain Bethune and several other officers were seriously wounded, while the hemorrhage of the ranks was appalling. I again ordered the advance, and knowing the officers and men of that gallant old regiment, I felt sure that they would follow their commander anywhere in the line of duty, though he led them to certain destruction. I passed through the column waving my sword, rushed forward to the ledge, and was promptly followed by my entire command in splendid style. We drove the Federals from their strong defensive position; five times they rallied and charged us—twice coming so near that some of my men had to use the bayonet—but vain was their effort. It was our time now to deal death and destruction to a gallant foe, and the account was speedily settled with a large balance in our favor; but this state of things was not long to continue. The long blue lines of Federal infantry were coming down on my right and closing in on my rear, while some dismounted cavalry were closing the only avenue of escape on my left, and had driven in my skirmishers. I sent my Sergeant-Major with a message to Colonel Bowles, of the Fourth Alabama, to come to my relief. He returned and reported the enemy to be between us and the Fourth Alabama, and swarming up the mountain side. By this time, the Federal reinforcements had completely enveloped my right. The lamented Captain Frank Park (who was afterwards killed at Knoxville) came and informed me that the Federals were closing in on our rear. I sent him to ascertain their numbers, and he soon returned, accompanied by Captain Hill (subsequently killed in front of Richmond), and reported that two regiments were coming up behind us, and just then I saw them halt behind a fence, from which they opened fire on us. At Balaklava, Captain Nolan's six hundred had "cannon to right of them, cannon to left of them, cannon in front of them that volleyed and thundered"; but at this moment the Fifteenth Alabama had infantry to the right of them, dismounted cavalry to the left of them, infantry in front of them and infantry in rear of them. With a withering and deadly fire pouring in upon us from every direction, it seemed that the entire command was doomed to destruction. While one man was shot in the face, his right hand or left hand comrade was shot in the side or back. Some were struck simultaneously with two or three balls from

different directions. Captains Hill and Park suggested that I should order a retreat; but this seemed impracticable. My dead and wounded were then greater in number than those still on duty. Of 644 men and 42 officers, I had lost 343 men and 19 officers. The dead literally covered the ground. The blood stood in puddles on the rocks. The ground was soaked with the blood of as brave men as ever fell on the red field of battle. I still hoped for reinforcements. It seemed impossible to retreat; I therefore replied to my captains: "Return to your companies; we will sell out as dearly as possible." Hill made no reply, but Park smiled pleasantly, gave me the military salute, and replied: "All right, sir." On reflection, however, a few moments later, I did order a retreat, but did not undertake to retire in order. I had the officers and men advised that when the signal was given every one should run in the direction from whence we came, and halt on the top of the mountain.

When the signal was given, we ran like a herd of wild cattle right through the line of dismounted cavalrymen. Some of my men as they ran through, seized three or four of the cavalrymen by the collar and carried them out prisoners. On the top of the mountain I made an attempt to halt and reform the regiment, but the men were helping wounded and disabled comrades, and scattered in the woods and among the rocks, so that it could not be done. This was just about sunset, and the fighting all along our line had pretty well ceased. At this time there were no Federals on Round Top. They never occupied the top of it until near dark. I was on foot, and in my exertions to reform my regiment on the top of the mountain I was so overcome with heat and fatigue that I fainted, and was carried back near to the point from which our advance commenced. It was now dark, and here we bivouacked for the night. After all had got up, I ordered the rolls of the companies to be called. When the battle commenced, four hours previously, I had the strongest and finest regiment in Hood's division. Its effectives numbered nearly 700 officers and men. Now 225 answered at roll call, and more than one-half of my officers had been left on the field. Some of my men that night voluntarily went back across the mountain, and in the darkness penetrated the Federal line for the purpose of removing some of our wounded. They reached the scene, and started out with some of the wounded officers, but were discovered and shot at by the Federal pickets, and had, in consequence, to leave the wounded, but succeeded in

getting back to the regiment. These men reported to me that Round Top was even at that late hour only occupied by a skirmish line.

By a survey of the field, made since the war by United States engineers, it has been demonstrated that Round Top is 116 feet higher than Little Round Top—the latter being 548 feet and the former 664 feet high—and only about 1,000 yards distant from the latter, which is almost in a direct line from the summit of Round Top with Cemetery Ridge, which was occupied by the Federal line of battle; so that it is manifest that if General Longstreet had crowned Round Top with his artillery any time that afternoon, even though it had only been supported by the two Alabama regiments, who had possession of it until sunset, he would have won the battle. General Longstreet, in his article of the 3d of November last, claims that Little Round Top was the key to the Federal position. In this he is evidently in error.

In the same article he also says:

"McLaws' line was consequently spread out to the left to protect its flank, and Hood's line was extended to the right to protect its flank from the sweeping fire of the large bodies of troops that were posted on Round Top. The importance of Round Top as a point d'appui was not appreciated until after my attack. General Meade seems to have alluded to it as a point to be occupied 'if practicable,' but in such slighting manner as to show that he did not deem it of great importance. So it was occupied by an inadequate force. As our battle progressed, pushing the Federals back from point to point, subordinate officers and soldiers, seeking shelter, as birds fly to cover in a tempest, found behind the large boulders of its rock-bound sides not only protection, but rallying points. These reinforcements to the troops already there checked our advance on the right, and some superior officer arriving just then divined from effect the cause, and threw a force into Round Top that transformed it as if by magic into a Gibraltar."

This statement is manifestly erroneous, as I have already shown, for although Longstreet was a lieutenant-general commanding a corps, and I but a colonel commanding one regiment, my testimony is to be preferred to his, for the plain reason that I was there, on Round Top, while he was not.

Major-General G. K. Warren, in his testimony before the Committee of Congress on the Conduct of the War, volume I, page 377, says:

"I sent word to General Meade that we would at once have to occupy that place (Round Top) very strongly. He sent, as quickly as possible, a division of General Sykes' corps; but before they

arrived the enemy's line of battle—I should think one mile and a half long—began to advance, and the battle became very heavy at once. The troops under General Sykes arrived barely in time to save Round Top hill, and they had a very desperate fight to hold it."

General Meade, in his testimony before the same Committee, volume I, page 332, says:

"The enemy threw immense masses upon General Sickles' corps, which, advanced and isolated in this way, it was not in my power to support promptly. At the same time that they threw these immense masses against General Sickles, a heavy column was thrown upon the Round Top mountain, *which was the key point of my whole position. If they had succeeded in occupying that it would have prevented me from holding any of the ground which I subsequently held to the last.* Immediately upon the batteries opening, I sent several staff officers to hurry up the column under Major-General Sykes, of the Fifth corps, then on its way, and which I had expected would have reached there by that time. This column advanced, reached the ground in a short time, and fortunately General Sykes was enabled, by throwing a strong force upon Round Top mountain, *where a most desperate and bloody struggle ensued,* to drive the enemy from it, and secure our foothold upon that important position."

The "bloody struggle" which Meade and Warren both say "ensued to drive the enemy from Round Top," was had with the two Alabama regiments alone. There were no other Confederate soldiers on Round Top during that afternoon. The other three regiments of Law's brigade were, doubtless, heavily engaged, but that occurred about Vincent's Spur, between Round Top and Little Round Top. The left of the Forty-seventh Alabama became widely separated from the right of the Fourth Alabama about the time we reached the summit of Round Top; there certainly was a wide gap between those regiments when the Forty-seventh and Fifteenth advanced down the northern or northeastern face of the mountain; and the discovery of this fact was the consideration that induced me to make that advance in a left oblique direction, as already stated. If there are any two things connected with the battle about which I can't possibly be mistaken, they are—

First. That there were no Confederate troops on the top of Round Top during the engagement, except the Fifteenth and Forty-seventh Alabama regiments; and,

Second. That the Federals did not occupy Round Top until after sunset, and probably not until after dark.

General Longstreet says: "At half-past 3 o'clock the order was given General Hood to advance upon the enemy, and hurrying to the head of McLaws' division, I moved with his line." What business had he, a corps commander, to advance with the line of battle on one part of the field? Instead of taking a position from which he could see the progress of the battle all along the line, and with the practiced eye of a great captain, taking in at once the whole situation, eager to discover and quick to take advantage of any mistake of his adversary, or weak points in his line, he was playing the part simply of a gallant brigadier, and advancing with his line of battle at one end of it, leaving the other to take care of itself or to be directed by his subordinates. There was no necessity for a display of his gallantry; no one questioned his courage. Had he been in his proper place, and exercising that vigilance and sagacity which his high position and duty required, the moment that his troops got possession of Round Top, he would have reinforced them and have sent at least a portion of his artillery to occupy it, and thus have secured the position which General Meade admits would have rendered it impossible for him to have held the ground he then occupied.

It would have won the battle, or at least have forced Meade to have abandoned his position. So great a general as R. E. Lee never orders an impossibility.

Having written all that I purposed writing, it is, perhaps, in bad taste to add anything more; but at the risk of criticism, I will relate two incidents of the battle.

The following did not come under my own observation, but I am satisfied of its correctness, and relate it as I received it. Any one who knows old Colonel Mike Bulger, of Tallapoosa county, Alabama, will see that it is characteristic. As already stated, he fell severely wounded on the evening of the 2d. His regiment fell back and left him on the field. He was struck in the breast by a minnie ball, which passed directly through his left lung. He was sitting by a tree and the blood gushing from his wound, when the Federals came on him. A captain or some subordinate officer, approached him and demanded his sword, when the following colloquy ensued:

Colonel B.—What is your rank, sir?

Captain—I am a captain, sir, and demand your sword.

Colonel B.—I am a lieutenant-colonel, sir, and will surrender my sword only to an officer of equal rank.

Captain—Give me your sword or I will kill you.

Colonel B.—You may kill me, sir; bring your colonel to me and I will surrender to him, but never to you.

The captain, struck by the old Rebel's persistency and high notions of honor and military etiquette, sent for his Colonel (Rice, of New York), to whom the sword was gracefully surrendered. Colonel B. is still living and one of the most respected citizens of Alabama.

On the third day, Law's brigade, still on the right, lay along the southern foot of Round Top. Our picket line extended considerably to the rear and nearly at right angles with the line of battle. About midday, or early in the afternoon, a squadron of Federal cavalry broke through our pickets, charged and tried to capture Riley's North Carolina battery of six guns in position on an eminence near a piece of woods, some four hundred yards in rear of Law's line. I was ordered to go with my regiment to protect the battery. I did not take time to countermarch, but moved rapidly, rear in front, throwing out a few skirmishers as I advanced. When ascending the hill at the edge of the woods, a portion of the cavalry came in between me and the battery. The officer commanding, with pistol in hand, ordered my skirmishers to surrender, to which they replied with a volley. The cavalry commander and his horse and one of his men fell to the ground, and the others dashed away. The lieutenant commanding the skirmishers, with a repeating rifle in his hands, then sprang forward and said to the wounded officer, who still grasped his pistol and was trying to raise, "Now you surrender!" to which he replied, "I will not do it"; and placing the pistol to his own head, shot his brains out. I halted my regiment, as the cavalry were gone, but did not go to the dead man, who lay not more than forty steps in my front, until one of the skirmishers brought me his shoulder straps, from which I discovered that he was a general. I then went to the body, and on examination found one or two letters in his pockets addressed to "General E. J. Farnsworth." I was soon ordered to another part of the field, and left the body where it fell.

WILLIAM C. OATES.

*Abbeville, Alabama, April 6th, 1878.*

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**Two Witnesses on the "Treatment of Prisoners"—Hon. J. P. Benjamin and General B. F. Butler.**

In our numbers for March and April, 1876, we very fully discussed the question of "*Treatment and Exchange of Prisoners*" during the war. We think that we fully demonstrated that the charges made against the Confederate Government of deliberate cruelty to prisoners were false; that our Government was more humane than the Federal Government, and that the suffering on both sides might have been prevented by carrying out the terms of the cartel for the exchange of prisoners, for the failure of which the *Federal authorities alone were responsible*.

Our statement of the question, and the documents, facts and figures which we gave, have never been answered, and we have had abundant testimony (not only from distinguished Confederates and intelligent foreigners, but also from candid men at the North whose opinions were all the other way before reading our discussion), that our argument is conclusive and cannot be answered. But in order that we may *accumulate* evidence of the truth of every position we have taken in this discussion, we shall continue from time to time to introduce additional papers bearing on the question.

We append the statements of two very different witnesses, given under very different circumstances. The first is a letter written by Hon. J. P. Benjamin, ex-Secretary of State of the Confederacy, to the London *Times* soon after the close of the war. The other is a report of General B. F. Butler's celebrated Lowell speech made in the early part of 1865, with the editorial comments of the New York *World*.

**Letter of Mr. Benjamin.**

*To the Editor of the Times :*

Sir—I find on arrival in England that public attention is directed afresh to the accusation made by the Federal authorities that prisoners of war were cruelly treated by the Confederates—not merely in exceptional cases by subordinate officials, but systematically, and in conformity with a policy deliberately adopted by President Davis, General Lee and Mr. Seddon. As a member of the Cabinet of President Davis from the date of his first inauguration under the provisional constitution to the final overthrow of the Confederate Government by force of arms, as a personal friend whose relations with Jefferson Davis have been of the most intimate and confidential nature, I feel it imperatively to be my duty to request your insertion of this letter in vindication of honorable men, who, less

fortunate than myself, are now held in close confinement by their enemies, and are unable to utter an indignant word in self-defence.

A very material fact in relation to this charge of cruelty was omitted in the recent letter from your "Richmond correspondent," who was probably not aware of it, but which I can attest from personal knowledge. During the difficulties which prevented the exchange of prisoners of war, cases arose which appealed so strongly to humanity that it was impossible for the most obdurate to remain insensible. The Federal authorities, therefore, empowered Colonel Mulford, their Commissioner of Exchange, to consent to a mutual delivery of such sick and disabled prisoners as were incapable of performing military service. To this class was the exchange of prisoners rigorously restricted. Colonel Ould, the Confederate Commissioner of Exchange (who has recently been honorably acquitted by the Federals themselves of the same false charge of cruelty to prisoners), made to the President, to the Secretary of War and to myself repeated complaints that prisoners on both sides were frequently delivered in a condition so prostrate as to render death certain from exposure during the transit between James river and Washington or Annapolis. Efforts were made in vain to check this evil. In spite of surgeon's certificates that they were too ill for removal without imminent danger, sick men on both sides, wearied by long confinement, fearful that the exchange would again be interrupted, longing for the sight of home and friends, would either insist on their ability to endure the journey, or professing that recovery was hopeless, would piteously implore to be allowed to see their families before death. The lifeless bodies of numbers of Confederates, shipped from the North under these circumstances, were delivered to us at City Point, and the like results have attended the delivery from our side. Rigid care was taken by the authorities of the United States to exclude from the exchange all cases of slight illness, in accordance with their avowed policy of preventing our armies from being recruited by returned prisoners, this being our only resource for filling our thinned ranks, while they were able to procure unlimited recruits from this side of the Atlantic. From the class just mentioned the most emaciated specimens were chosen by our enemies, and exhibited as conclusive evidence that we exercised habitual cruelty toward prisoners of war. The most wretched and desperate cases were even made the originals for "photographs which can not lie," and the revolting pictures of human infirmity thus procured were affixed as embellishments to sensational reports, manipulated by Congressional committees and sanitary commissions.

It is not my purpose to examine in detail the question whether on us or on the Federals rests the responsibility of interrupting the exchange of prisoners, and thus producing a mass of human misery and anguish of which few examples can be found in history. The published correspondence of the Commissioner of Exchange, and certain revelations made by Federal officials in public speeches and in newspaper articles, will be sufficient to satisfy on this point the

few who take the pains to ascertain the truth; but in response to the allegations imputed, in the latest news from America to General Hitchcock, that "for the delays in exchanging and the consequent sufferings of the prisoners, the fault rested entirely with the Confederates," I would recall the following facts:

The first effort to establish a cartel of exchange was made by the Confederates when I was temporarily in charge of the War Office, at Richmond, toward the close of the Provisional Government. General Howell Cobb on our part, and General Wool on the part of the United States, agreed on a cartel which was submitted to their respective governments for approval. In my instructions to General Cobb he was especially directed to propose that, after exhausting exchanges, the party having surplus prisoners in possession should allow them to go home on parole till the other belligerent should succeed in capturing an equivalent number for exchange. When this proposal was made by us, we held a larger number of prisoners than were in the hands of the enemy. It was accepted by General Wool as one of the terms of the cartel, but, unfortunately, some successes of our enemies intervened before ratification by their government. They obtained, in their turn, an excess of prisoners, and at once refused to ratify the cartel. In the ensuing year, when General Randolph was Secretary of War, the Confederates were a second time in possession of an excess of prisoners, and succeeded in negotiating a cartel under which they liberated many thousands of prisoners on parole, without any present equivalent, thus securing in advance the liberation of a like number of their own soldiers that might afterward fall into the enemy's hands. This cartel remained for many months in operation. No check or difficulty occurred as long as we made a majority of captures.

In July, 1863, the fortune of war became very adverse to the Confederacy. The battle of Gettysburg checked the advance of General Lee on the Federal capital, while almost simultaneously the fall of Vicksburg and Port Hudson gave to our enemies a large preponderance in the number of prisoners. The authorities at Washington immediately issued general orders refusing to receive from General Lee the prisoners held by him, until they should be reduced to possession in Virginia, thus subjecting their own men to the terrible sufferings glanced at by Colonel Fremantle, in order to embarrass General Lee's movements. They further refused to restore to us the excess of prisoners held by them, after having received for nearly or quite a year the benefit of the special provision of the cartel when it operated in their favor; and during the entire war they never once consented to a delivery to us of any prisoners in excess of the number for which we were prepared to return an immediate equivalent.

It requires no sagacity to perceive that every motive of interest as well as of humanity operated to induce us to facilitate the exchange of prisoners and to submit even to unjust and unequal terms in order to recover soldiers whom we could replace from no other source. On the other hand, interest and humanity were at war in

their influence on the Federal officials. Others must judge of the humanity and justice of the policy which consigned hundreds of thousands of wretched men to captivity, apparently hopeless, but I can testify unhesitatingly to its sagacity and efficacy, and to the pitiless sternness with which it was executed. Indeed, this refusal to exchange was one of the most fatal blows dealt us during the war, and contributed to our overthrow more, perhaps, than any other single measure. I write not to make complaint of it, but simply to protest against the attempt of the Federals so to divide the consequences of their own conduct as to throw on us the odium attached to a cruelty plainly injurious to us, obviously beneficial to themselves.

The sense of duty which prompts this letter would be but imperfectly satisfied were I to withhold at this juncture the testimony which none so well as myself can offer in relation to the charge of inhumanity made against President Davis. For the four years during which I have been one of his most trusted advisers, the recipient of his confidence and the sharer to the best of my abilities in his labors and responsibilities, I have learned to know him better, perhaps, than he is known by any other living man. Neither in private conversation nor in Cabinet council have I ever heard him utter one unworthy thought, one ungenerous sentiment. On repeated occasions, when the savage atrocities of such men as Butler, Turchin, McNeil and others were the subject of anxious consideration, and when it was urged upon Jefferson Davis, not only by friends in private letters, but by members of his Cabinet in council, that it was his duty to the people and to the army to endeavor to repress such outrages by retaliation, he was immovable in his resistance to such counsels, insisting that it was repugnant to every sentiment of justice and humanity that the innocent should be made victims for the crimes of such monsters. Without betraying the confidence of official intercourse, it may be permitted me to say that when the notorious expedition of Dahlgren against the city of Richmond had been defeated, and the leader killed in his flight, the papers found upon his body showed that he had been engaged in an attempt to assassinate the President and the heads of the Cabinet, to release the Federal prisoners confined in Richmond, to set fire to the city and to loose his men and the released prisoners, with full license to gratify their passions on the helpless inhabitants.

The instructions to his men had been elaborately prepared, and his designs communicated to them in an address; the incendiary materials for firing the town formed part of his equipment. The proof was complete and undeniable. In the action in which Dahlgren fell, some of his men were taken prisoners. They were brought to Richmond, and public opinion was unanimous that they were not entitled to be considered as prisoners of war; that they ought to be put on trial as brigands and assassins, and executed as such, if found guilty. In Cabinet council the conviction was expressed that these men had acquired no immunity from punishment for

their crimes, if guilty, by the fact of their having been admitted to surrender by their captors, before knowledge of their offences. A discussion ensued which became so heated as almost to create unfriendly feeling, by reason of the unshaken firmness of Mr. Davis in maintaining that although these men merited a refusal to grant them quarter in the heat of battle, they had been received to mercy by their captors as prisoners of war, and as such were sacred; and that we should be dishonored if harm should overtake them after their surrender, the acceptance of which constituted, in his judgment, a pledge that they should receive the treatment of prisoners of war. To Jefferson Davis alone, and to his constancy of purpose, did these men owe their safety in spite of hostile public opinion, and in opposition to two-thirds of the Cabinet.

I forbear from further trespass on your space, although I am in possession of numerous other facts bearing on the subject that could not fail to interest all who are desirous of seeing justice done to the illustrious man, of whose present condition I will not trust myself to speak.

I remain, sir, your obedient servant,

J. P. BENJAMIN.

#### General Butler's Lowell Speech.

In a review of Butler's speech at Lowell, the *New York World* holds the following language:

Butler does not content himself with attempting to show that General Grant's military operations in Virginia are a total failure; he also tries to fasten on him the brutal indifference to the sufferings of the Union soldiers. He not only insinuates that General Grant is guilty of a useless and butcherly prodigality of their lives, but endeavors to fasten on him the responsibility for their lingering starvation in loathsome Southern prisons. Butler states that himself had made a successful arrangement with Mr. Ould, the Southern Commissioner, for the exchange of all our white soldiers against an equal number of the Rebel prisoners held by us, leaving the exchange of the negroes for a separate and subsequent arrangement. This, he says, would have left a balance of fifteen thousand Rebel prisoners in our possession, and about five hundred negro prisoners in the hands of the Rebels. When matters had reached this stage, General Butler was permitted to proceed no further. What then followed was so remarkable, and puts upon a painfully interesting and much mooted question a face so entirely new, that the account of it must be given in General Butler's own language:

"I reported the points of agreement between myself and the Rebel agent to the Secretary of War, and asked for power to adjust the other questions of difference, so as to have the question of enslaving negro soldiers stand alone, to be dealt with by itself; and that the whole power of the United States should be exerted to do justice to those who had fought the battles of the country and been captured.

in its service. The whole subject was referred by the Secretary of War to the Lieutenant-General Commanding, who telegraphed me on the 14th of April, 1864, in substance: 'Break off all negotiations on the subject of exchange till further orders.' And, therefore, all negotiations were broken off, save that a special exchange of sick and wounded on either side went on. On the 20th of April, I received another telegram of General Grant, ordering 'not another man to be given to the Rebels.' To that I answered, on the same day: 'Lieutenant-General Grant's instructions shall be implicitly obeyed. I assume that you do not mean to stop the special exchange of the sick and wounded now going on.' To this I received a reply in substance: 'Do not give the Rebels a single able-bodied man.' From that hour, so long as I remained in the department, exchanges of prisoners stopped under that order, because I could not give the Rebels any of their able-bodied soldiers in exchange. By sending the sick and wounded forward, however, some twelve thousand of our suffering soldiers were relieved, being upward of eight thousand more than we gave the Rebels. In August last, Mr. Ould, finding negotiations were broken off and that no exchanges were made, wrote to General Hitchcock, the Commissioner at Washington, that the Rebels were ready to exchange, man for man, all the prisoners held by them, as I had proposed in December. Under the instructions of the Lieutenant-General, I wrote to Mr. Ould a letter, which has been published, saying: 'Do you mean to give up all your action, and revoke all your laws about black men employed as soldiers?' These questions were therein argued justly, as I think, not diplomatically, but obtrusively and demonstratively, not for the purpose of furthering exchange of prisoners, but for the purpose of preventing and stopping the exchange and furnishing a ground on which we could fairly stand. I am now at liberty to state these facts, because they appear in the correspondence on the subject of exchange now on the public files of Congress, furnished by the War Department upon resolution. I am not at liberty to state my opinions as to the correctness and propriety of this course of action of the Lieutenant-General in relation to exchanges, because it is not proper to utter a word of condemnation of any act of my superiors; I may not even applaud where I think them right, lest, not applauding in other instances, such acts as I may mention would imply censure. I only desire that the responsibility of stopping exchanges of prisoners, be it wise or unwise, should rest upon the Lieutenant-General Commanding, and not upon me. I have carried the weight of so grave a matter for nine months, and now propose, as the facts are laid before Congress and the country, not to carry any longer any more of it than belongs to me. Since I wrote my farewell address to the Army of the James, I have received letters from the far West, saying 'Why do you claim that you have not uselessly sacrificed the lives of your men, when you have left thousands of our brethren and sons to starve and rot in Southern prisons?' In answer to all such appeals I am allowed only to repeat, I have not uselessly sacrificed the lives of the soldiers of the Union;



their blood does not stain my garments. This is not criticism upon the acts of anybody, but only the enunciation of a fact, in explanation of which the responsibilities of my position will not allow me to say more."

If this astounding recital is true, it unmasks one of the most remarkable examples upon record of cold-hearted atrocity, studied deceit and cruel imposition on the public. We forbear all remark on General Grant's alleged share in these discreditable transactions until a reasonable time has elapsed for him or such of his friends as may be cognizant of the facts, to make the denial due to his reputation. But candor requires no such delay in judging of General Butler. He has unconsciously painted his own portrait in colors of the blackest craft and hypocrisy. He attempts to cast on General Grant the admitted odium of leaving thousands of our captured brothers to die deaths of horror and starvation. "Their blood," he says, "does not stain my garments." But, by his own showing, this hypocritical pretender to mercy and humanity was the accomplice and tool of General Grant in a business revolting to humanity! By his own account, he gave his aid, he lent the resources of his devilish cunning, in writing a piece of chicanery deliberately intended to place the whole subject in a false light! It was a fixed and foregone conclusion that no prisoners should be exchanged; and he himself informs us that he (Butler) was base enough and subservient enough to prostitute his talents in the preparation of a document setting forth false reasons for an act of monstrous inhumanity to our starving captives! He knew when he wrote that letter to Mr. Ould that the reasons stated in it were sham reasons; that while affecting anxiety for an exchange, no exchange was either desired or would be permitted; that, to use his own unblushing language, it was written "not for the purpose of furthering exchange of prisoners, but for the purpose of preventing the exchange."

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## Editorial Paragraphs.

DR. THOMPSON'S REPORT OF CAPTAIN MANGOLE'S LECTURE ON GENERAL LEE and Dr. Curry's reply in our August number, has elicited a very gratifying letter from Captain Mangole, in which, it will be seen, he clearly shows that Dr. Thompson did not report him correctly.

The Secretary sent Captain Mangole advance proof-sheets of Dr. Curry's review, and took the liberty in his letter of asking the accomplished soldier what *Confederate* authorities he had access to in the preparation of his "History of the Civil War in America." Captain Mangole's reply was not intended for publication, but is so candid and so valuable, as illustrating the importance of our being able to furnish material to those who desire to know and to tell the truth of our history, that we trust he will pardon us for giving his letter in full:

CASSEL, August 16th, 1878.

Rev. Dr. J. WILLIAM JONES, *Secretary Southern Historical Society*:

Dear Sir—Some days ago, when I was about to start on a little journey, I received a letter from you dated July 9th, together with a number of pamphlets concerning different episodes of the late civil war. Enclosed were the advanced proof-sheets of an article by Rev. J. L. M. Curry, commenting on an article which Rev. Dr. Thompson, of Berlin, had published in the *Independent*.

You will permit me to write a few words in answer to Rev. Dr. Curry's statement concerning my notion of General Lee's resignation, as stated in Dr. Thompson's paper. Before I begin, I must beg you, however, to keep in mind that I am writing in a foreign language, and that I cannot express my views so clearly and precisely as I could in my own language.

Dr. Curry says in his paper: "This matter of *breach of faith*, so quietly assumed in this accusation by Captain Mangole and Dr. Thompson, turns entirely upon the character of our government."

Nothing has been farther from me than to "quietly assume the accusation of breach of faith." It is true I have said that we (the Prussian officers), according to our understanding, could never comprehend how an officer could ever feel called upon to decide on which side he will fight, if one of the two contending parties carries the flag to which he has pledged his faith and allegiance by a solemn oath, and that, therefore, to our understanding, the decision of Lee would always remain incomprehensible. This part of my lecture, no doubt, gave origin to Dr. Thompson's remark, that to a Prussian officer the violation of an oath appears a crime so damnable as to be inconceivable. Now, I do not pretend to say that a Prussian officer is any more sensitive to the guilt of the violation of an oath than any other honorable man, and by the very emphasis I put on the words—*our understanding*—I meant to induce the hearer to refrain from judging and condemning Lee, as there must be circumstances veiled to our understanding, which, if fully known and appreciated by us, would let Lee's decision appear in another light than that of the violation of an oath. Moreover, I then went on to say (and I translate the following paragraph literally from the MS. of my lecture): "The more incomprehensible it is to us that Lee came to this and not to the opposite decision, the more it becomes our duty to seek an explanation; and if we consider all the circumstances, we think we are justified in saying that a

man who gave to his son, just admitted to the military academy, as a leading motto for his professional career the beautiful words: 'Duty is the sublimest word of our language,'—could follow only that path, which, after earnest reflection, he was convinced his duty commanded him to follow. This conclusion is warranted by the stainless purity of his character, which makes his image as a man so noble and sublime; it is warranted by his truly Christian disposition and his simple, almost childlike piety. But if we should want further proof, we could find it in the answer he gave, when, after the war, he was asked directly by the Reconstruction Committee what were his personal views on the question of secession: 'It was my view,' he said, 'that the act of Virginia, in withdrawing herself from the United States, carried me along with it as a citizen of Virginia, and that her laws and acts were binding on me.' I think that is sufficient to show to you and Dr. Curry that it never entered my mind to quietly assume the accusation of the violation of an oath on the part of Lee. Let me now turn to the other contents of your very kind letter. You ask me what Confederate authorities I have access to in preparing my book on the civil war. I frankly admit that the Southern sources have until now been flowing very scantily. I am in possession of and have consulted the following works:

Pollard's *Lost Cause*, and *Southern History of the War*; *Biographies of Lee*, by McCabe and Cook; *Biography of "Stonewall" Jackson*, by Cook; *Life of Jefferson Davis*, by Pollard; *Battle-fields of Virginia*, by —; *History of Morgan's Cavalry*, by Basil W. Duke; *A Rebel War-clerk's Diary*, by Jones, and General Joseph E. Johnston's *Narrative*. I think that is about all I have. I have ordered lately the latest biography of Lee, which has come out this spring, by Marshall, if I am not mistaken. You may be sure it has been my earnest desire to be as impartial as possible, and it has been a source of constant vexation, but it seemed next to impossible to get at any reliable and extensive military history of the great struggle, written from a Southern standpoint. For instance, I have only the first volume of the Confederate reports of battles, published by order of Congress. (I forgot to mention this above.) You are so very kind as to offer to furnish me everything in your power, and you may be sure I shall accept whatever you send with the greatest gratitude, and shall make the most conscientious and impartial use of it. Up to the present there has appeared only one volume of my book, which brings the history of the war to the close of 1861. Nothing more will be printed before the manuscript of the whole is finished, and it seems to me now more than likely that I shall then suppress the first volume and write that over again also. So you see everything you can send to me will be made use of, and in the most careful and unbiased way. I dare say the monthly papers of your Society contain treasures for the historian, at least if I am justified in judging from the two numbers you were kind enough to send me; and I can only repeat, what I have said before, that everything you send me shall be received with great gratitude, and be used to the best advantage. Hoping that this letter is only the beginning of a relation from which I hope the greatest furtherance of my object, to give my German brother-officers a reliable and impartial history of the great struggle,

I remain, dear sir, yours, very respectfully,

F. MANGOLE.

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FREE ACCESS TO THE ARCHIVE BUREAU at Washington has been a long-felt desideratum by every seeker after the truth. Our readers were advised of the failure of our efforts in this direction during the administration of the War Department by Secretaries Belknap and Cameron.

We had had no further application, but had been gratified to hear that a more liberal policy seemed to characterize the present administration—that

Secretary McCrary seemed disposed to allow our people more privileges than we had ever had before—and that Colonel Scott, who had been put in charge of the archives, seemed to be a gentleman of very liberal views.

We are glad to be able to announce to the Society and to our friends generally, that our Committee has received from General Marcus J. Wright (a gallant soldier of the Army of Tennessee), who has been employed as an agent of the Archive Bureau, a letter, in which he says that the Secretary of War authorizes him to tender any agent of the Southern Historical Society free access to the archives, and the privilege of copying anything needed for historical purposes. This proffer (made voluntarily and without conditions) will be appreciated by our friends.

Of course our Committee have cordially accepted and reciprocated the kind offer. The War Department seems very anxious to complete its files of Confederate documents, and we should be glad to do anything in our power to aid in this, as it is obviously very important that the Confederacy should be fully represented in any publication of documents which may be made. If parties have original MSS. which they are unwilling to part with, we would be very glad to take charge of them until copies could be made, both for our Society and the War Department, when they could be returned to the owners.

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THE YELLOW FEVER SCOURGE has excited wide sympathy, and the response to appeals for help has been general and liberal. We have been especially touched by an appeal from the Louisiana Division of the Army of Northern Virginia Association. This organization (of which Governor Nichols is President) is striving to help its members or their families, who are in need because of this fearful malady, and surely their comrades everywhere will esteem it a privilege to aid them in their noble work. The Virginia Division, Army of Northern Virginia, are moving in the matter, and we appeal to all who may read this to send a contribution.

Remittances may be made direct to *John H. Murray, Treasurer, 155 Canal Street, New Orleans*, or, if more convenient, we will cheerfully receive and forward any sums that may be sent to our office.

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#### **Books Received.**

The University Publishing Company, New York, has kindly sent us "*Swinton's Army of the Potomac*," "*Lee's Memoirs of the War of 1776*," and "*Holmes' History of the United States*." We shall hereafter review these books, but may only say now that they are gotten up in the highest style of the book-makers' art, and reflect credit on this company, which is laboring with such success to furnish our people with "non-partisan school books."